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The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Extreme Violence against Children through Legal System in the I.R. Iran

On 5 September 1991, the Islamic Republic of Iran signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on 13 July 1994, ratified it. While any human being below the age of 18 is considered a child according the Convention, no clear definition exists in Iranian law. The age of legal maturity, which also determines a person's criminal responsibility, is set at 9 lunar years for girls and 15 lunar years for boys. The age of marriage is set at 13 solar years for girls (however, the age threshold may be lowered with the permission of the father and the court) and at 15 solar years for boys. In the new Islamic Penal Code, dating from 2013, no exact definition of "child" is offered. For instance, in articles 88 and 89 (*ta'zir* crimes), the category of "children" covers a range of 9 to 15 solar years and "juveniles" of 15 to 18 solar years, irrespective of endeavours to implement security and educational measures and administer punishments that are adapted to the children's age. In article 147, on the other hand, criminal responsibility is extended to "mature individuals" (9 lunar years for girls and 15 lunar years for boys). In practice, punishment does not correspond to the differentiation of age groups set forth in the preceding articles of the law.

Death Penalty for Juvenile offenders

In Islamic penal law so-called "retaliatory punishments" exist. These punishments have a nemesis right in that the heir of the murder victim (except for the latter's spouse) is entitled to request from the court that the murderer be punished by retaliation.

Unfortunately, even though the Islamic Republic of Iran claims that no child under the age of 18 is executed in Iran, there have been cases of execution below this international legal age. In recent years, children who have committed a murder while still minors are held in prison and then executed as soon as they reach the legal age.

The way of processing the court files of child offenders is deeply flawed. Besides, practices such as extorting confessions through torture and force; punishments like lashing, violation (rape) and humiliation; long-term or life prison sentences without a chance of release; detaining children together with adult and repeat offenders; denying them access to a lawyer until after the interrogation stages are completed; and the absence of a special court dealing with the crimes of children and juveniles breach the rights of children (Article 37 of the Convention) and pave the way for numerous misjudgements and unjust sentences against minors.

Iran ranks first in the world for the execution of children. Below is a list of minors executed from 2008 until now. All information has been published by reliable sources.

1	Javad Shoja'i[1]	16 at time of offence	26 February 2008	Murder
2	Mohammad Hasanzadeh[2]	17 at time of execution	10 June 2007	Murder
3	Hasan Mozaffari[3]	Under 18 at time of offence	22 July 2007	Adultery by force
4	Rahman Shahidi[4]	Under 18 at time of offence	22 July 2007	Adultery by force
5	Reza Hejazi[5]	15 at time of offence	19 August 2008	Murder
6	Behnam Zare'[6]	15 at time of offence	26 August 2008	Murder
7	Gholamreza H[7] (Afghan)	17 at time of offence	29 October 2008	Murder
8	Ahmad Zare'[8]	17 at time of offence	30 December 2008	---
9	Molla Gol Hasan[9] (Afghan)	17 at time of offence	21 January 2009	Murder
10	Delara Darabi[10]	17 at time of offence	1 May 2009	Murder

11	Ali Ja'fari[11]	17 at time of offence	20 May 2009	---
12	Behnud Shoja'i[12]	17 at time of offence	11 October 2009	Murder
13	Mosleh Zamani[13]	17 at time of offence	17 December 2009	Sexual offences
14	Mohammad A.[14]	17 at time of offence	10 July 2010	---
15	2 juveniles A.N. / H.B.[15]	17 at time of offence	20 April 2011	---
16	Alireza Molla Soltani[16]	17 at time of execution	21 September 2011	Murder of Ruhollah Dadash.
17	Arash Rahmani[17]	16 or 17 at time of offence, 18 at time of execution	28 January 2010	Collaboration with the Kingdom Assembly of Iran
18	Erfan Qoli Nezhad[18]	18 at time of execution	15 September 2013	Adultry by force
19	Unknown in Kazerun[19]	14 at time of offence, 18 at time of execution	September 2013	Murder
20	Ali (Kianush) Naderi[20]	14 at time of offence	16 January 2013	Murder

The following minors are already sentenced to death and are in death row:

- Bahaeddin Ghasem Zadeh:
Bahaeddin Ghasem Zadeh was arrested on charges of murder in 2013 and has been sentenced to *ghessas* ("retaliation").[21]
- Ashkan Miri:
With four votes in favour and one against, the penal court of the province of Fars sentenced Ashkan Miri to *ghessas* by execution.[22]
- Mohammad Reza Haddadi
Born 18 March 1988, Mohammad Reza Haddadi was 15 years old at the time of his arrest for the murder of Mohammad Baqer Rahmat. He is detained at Adel Abad prison in Shiraz.[23]
- Mohammad (Maher) Ayyashi
Mohammad Ayyashi is detained in Kazerun prison on charges of murder during a street fight. His sentence was due to be executed on 24 September 2013 but has so far been postponed.[24]
-Sina Paymard
He was detained for 3.5 years in Raja'i Shahr prison Karaj and twice taken up to the foot of the gallows. Upon payment of blood money and with the approval of the victim's heirs, he was released. However, according to his defence lawyer, he was then admitted to a psychiatric hospital with depression brought on by the traumatic experience of prison and death row. Still in hospital, he died on the consequences of his mental illness.

Influence of Public Execution on Children

The only justification ever presented by the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran to implement public executions is to impart legitimacy to the feeling of vengeance and restore a sense of peace and security to society. However, it thereby sends out the message that justice and social peace can be restored by executing the offender. Children watch these scenes alongside with adults. Violence becomes justified and interiorised and a positive model of violence is suggested to children. Short of the ability to distinguish the dangers, children emulate what is shown to them. As a result, two children died in Iran in 2013 while playing "execution." One of them, called Mehran Yusofi, eight, from the

village of Kalash Lulem in the district of Javanrud, wanted to reconstruct the execution of Ra'uf Mostafa'i, an inhabitant of the same village, who had been publicly executed. The boy lost his life in the course of this game.
The second instance is Mohammad Ashubi, seven, from the village of Fishvar in the province of Fars, who also lost his life while playfully reconstructing an execution.[25]

Marriage with adoptive children

In September 2013, a Bill on adoption of children under state care passed through the Iranian parliament and approved by the Guardian Council and consequently became law on 23 October 2013. Article 27 of the Bill sanctions the marriage of the adopted child to the adopted parents.
In addition to the harmful effects and damages caused by the passing and implementation of the supplement to Article 27 of the Bill for the Protection of Children and Young Persons Without Caregiver or With an Inadequate Caregiver, which on its own can be seen to violate the rights of children and in particular those of girls, there are other laws and ordinances such as *Sigheh* or "temporary marriage"[26]: temporary marriage - which can even be pronounced by the spouse himself - and Article 1041 of the Iranian Civil Code, which sets the age of marriage for girls at 13 solar years,[27] lead to a situation where a male guardian can enter into marriage with his female ward without any legal restriction. Alongside each other and jointly, these three laws compound the potential for all kinds of harm and abuse of specially girl children.

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